

Neighborhood News

Phoenix Neighborhood Services Department

April 2003

NSD Hosts Successful Open House



Staff shared information and received input by residents on the many Neighborhood Services programs and services.

More than 100 residents and neighborhood leaders attended the recent Open House the Neighborhood Services Department hosted at Phoenix City Hall.

The residents and guests took advantage of the event to interact with NSD staff members and learn about the many services and programs the department offers and provides. An overview of the Open House is currently being shown on PHX 11.

Check the city's Web site, phoenix.gov, for listings.

As a key component of the Open House, residents were encouraged to participate in focus groups and provide their thoughts on the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance (NPO) and Code Enforcement Policy (Policy). The NPO and Policy are directly related to neighborhood preservation and maintenance.

The information gathered during the focus groups will be incorporated into the annual review of the NPO and Policy, which the City Council will review later this spring.

Central Avenue Business Corridor Revitalization Project on Track

Sunnyslope residents soon will break ground on a commercial revitalization project in the Sunnyslope Village Center Neighborhood Initiative Area. The project is located along Central Avenue from the Arizona Canal to Hatcher Road.

The revitalization is the result of a partnership between the city of Phoenix Neighborhood Services and Street Transportation departments, Sunnyslope Village Revitalization, Inc., the Arts Commission, local business owners and the community.

The Central Avenue project involves several activities:

- ▶ Neighborhood Services and Sunnyslope Village Revitalization, Inc., provided land for architectural firms to construct two new office and studio facilities. One structure is completed and the second is scheduled for completion by this summer.
- ▶ The Street Transportation Department partnered with Neighborhood Services to improve a blighted alleyway east of Central from Townley to Alice avenues.

▶ Neighborhood Services' Storefront Improvement Program will assist with the renovation of the exteriors of three commercial properties. The storefront project is scheduled for completion in June.

▶ Street Transportation will improve the Central Avenue streetscape under the Landscape Retrofit Program. Improvements include reconfiguring the center median and installing new paving, curbs, gutters, sidewalks and landscaping. Completion is set for this summer.

▶ The Arts Commission has linked the community and project designers with a public artist to create an artistic entry gateway on the bridge crossing the Arizona Canal.

These projects represent a private sector investment of approximately \$2.5 million and a public sector investment of approximately \$1 million.

The improvements will complement the Sunnyslope Village Shopping Center located at Central and Dunlap avenues that opened in September 2000.

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Free Neighborhood Improvement Workshops Set For April

Would you like to learn more about the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance and what it means to you? Or perhaps you would like to learn how to create better landlord/tenant relationships?

Then sign up this month for the series of workshops the Neighborhood Services Department is sponsoring on neighborhood improvement.

The workshops are free, but registration is requested. A complete listing of the workshops can be found on the city's Web site at phoenix.gov/NSD/NSDworkshops_eng.pdf.

ASU submits findings on Fight Back study

The Morrison Institute of Public Policy of Arizona State University recently conducted a community-based evaluation of the Neighborhood Fight Back Program.

The Neighborhood Services Department is reviewing the findings and conclusions, which include:

- ◆ Fight Back has a basis for future success.
- ◆ The strength of the neighborhood organization is key to the success and sustainability of Fight Back.
- ◆ Fight Back is at a crossroads. (Specifically, standardization of some program elements have been positive, while others need more flexibility.)

The Fight Back program was started in 1989-90 with a pilot program in City Council District 8. The program began as a resident mobilization effort to provide a temporary increase in city services to reduce crime, prevent blight and stabilize neighborhoods.

Since 1992-93, each City Council District has been allocated funds for this program.

COUNCIL CORNER



*Councilwoman
Peggy Bilsten,
District 3*

Auto theft in Arizona climbed 17 percent last year, making us the No. 1 state in the nation for vehicle thefts per capita.

According to the Arizona Auto Theft Authority,

more than 50,000 Arizona vehicles were stolen in 2002.

As theft rates have soared in the Valley, recovery rates have declined. Approximately 61 percent of stolen vehicles were recovered in 2002, compared to 79 percent a decade earlier.

Throughout the past year and continuing on this year, car owners can learn how to beat these statistics and protect their cars at special Auto Theft Prevention Days.

At these events free VIN etching, and enrollment in the "Watch Your Car" program is offered. Protecting our neighborhoods is paramount to the citizens of Phoenix, and these events provide tools for residents to make our communities even safer and more livable.

Volunteers will use special kits to etch small Vehicle Identification Numbers (VINs) onto automobile windows. Usually VIN etching costs approximately \$20 per car, but this service is provided for free at the events. It takes approximately 10 minutes to etch each car.

Auto thieves can take apart your whole car in a matter of minutes. If a professional car thief sees small VIN numbers etched on your car windows, he or she knows they will have trouble selling the parts and will look for a different car.

The "Watch Your Car" decal program is a voluntary program

developed by the Arizona Automobile Theft Authority (AATA). Participants register their car with the AATA and receive free decals to display in their vehicle's front and rear windows.

The decal lets law enforcement officials know the vehicle is not usually in use between the hours of 1 and 5 a.m., when the majority of thefts occur.

If a police officer sees the vehicle in operation between these hours, he has the authority to pull it over, determine if it has been stolen and notify the owner that their vehicle is being illegally operated.

It also gives a police officer the authority to pull it over, if it is within one mile of the U.S. borders, at any hour.

For more information on these events you can call my office at 602-262-7441 or e-mail me at peggy.bilsten@phoenix.gov.



Neighborhood Preservation customer survey yields high marks

Neighborhood Service Department's annual review of the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance and Code Enforcement Policy yielded some positive, striking results in a recent survey conducted by Behavioral Research Center.

Key findings of the resident survey include:

- ✓ 59 percent of residents graded the city seven or higher on a one-to-ten scale when asked to rate the city's job in requiring property owners to maintain their properties to minimum standards and enforcing cleanup

ordinances. This is a significant improvement from the 50 percent recorded in 2002.

- ✓ 89 percent of residents aware of the city's neighborhood ordinances feel they are working either "very well" (44 percent) or "fairly well" (45 percent) – another significant improvement from the 80 percent reported in 2002.

Property maintenance issues continue to be a concern to Phoenix residents. Nearly one-half of residents (47 percent) believe that "houses and yards that are not well maintained" is



a problem in their neighborhood, with 16 percent believing it is a major problem and 31 percent a minor problem.

Forty-five percent believe "graffiti" is a problem and 26 percent believed "vacant lots" are a problem. Each of these readings are statistically unchanged from 2002.

Keep Swimming Pools Safe for Children

As the swimming season approaches, it's a good time to review city of Phoenix requirements for swimming pool enclosures.

Since 1990, the city has required a permanent fence, wall or barrier around all swimming pools, spas, and hot tubs to restrict access from the adjacent property. City ordinances also require an inner barrier to completely separate the pool from houses or apartment units.

Pools that were constructed prior to May 4, 1990 do not require an inner barrier unless children under the age of 6 regularly inhabit the residence.

The property owner or responsible party in charge of the pool must make sure that the required enclosures, including gates, doors, latches and other parts of the barrier are safe and in good working order.

The city's Water Safety Task Force created a Water Safety Hotline, 602-495-5555, to address pool safety questions. By calling the hotline, you can learn pool fencing requirements, receive CPR information, report a swimming pool without appropriate fencing and learn the operating hours of city of Phoenix pools.

Lets work together and keep our children safe around water.

C A L E N D A R

A P R I L

2,16 City Council Neighborhood Revitalization, Housing and Historic Preservation Subcommittee,
10 a.m. - noon Phoenix City Hall, City Council Subcommittee Room, 12th floor, 200 W. Washington St. Call 602-261-8875

4 Minority Business City-Certification Seminar.
Free. Call 602-262-6790 or TTY 602-534-1557.

9 Home Maintenance Workshop on Electrical.
Free. Call 602-495-0700.

10,11,12 BOPA (batteries, oil, paint, anti-freeze, appliances, computers) collection,
8 a.m. - 2 p.m., Palmcroft Baptist Church, 15825 N. 35th Ave. Call 602-262-7251 with questions.

17 Landlord/Tenant workshop, Phoenix City Hall,
200 W. Washington St., Assembly Room A, first floor. Free, registration required. Call 602-262-7344.

23 Home Maintenance Workshop on Evaporative Coolers.
Free. Call 602-495-0700.

26 Code Enforcement Basics Workshop, Phoenix City Hall,
200 W. Washington St., Assembly Room A, first floor. Free, registration required. Call 602-262-7344.

Contact NSD

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City of Phoenix general information (602) 262-6011
Community Development Division . (602) 534-2393
Coordination Division (602) 495-3738
NSD Director's office (602) 534-2825
Fight Back Program (602) 495-3738
Graffiti Busters hotline (602) 495-7014
Graffiti cell phone hotline #4663
Graffiti in progress 9-1-1
Grants Administration (602) 262-7158
Landlord/Tenant counseling (602) 262-7210
Neighborhood Association list (602) 495-0113
Neighborhood Economic
Development (602) 495-5249
Preservation Division (602) 262-7844
Property maintenance violations . . (602) 262-7844
Property maintenance violations
. blight@phoenix.gov
Revitalization Division (602) 262-4808

phoenix.gov/NSD

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Para recibir este boletín informativo en español, póngase en contacto con Michelle Morales al (602) 495-0113, ó por correo electrónico a michelle.morales@phoenix.gov en la Internet.

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